Clinical Decisions

720.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy recognizes that a coordinated effort between the contract medical provider and the Chief Deputy of Corrections is needed to ensure an adequate health care system. It emphasizes the importance of clinical decisions being the sole responsibility of the qualified health care professional.

720.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Clinical decisions - The process of formulating a differential diagnosis with information gathered from an inmate's medical history and physical and mental examinations, developing a list of possible causes and ordering tests to help refine the list or identify a specific disease.

Differential diagnosis - A systematic method of identifying unknowns or diagnosing a specific disease using a set of symptoms and testing as a process of elimination.

720.2 POLICY

Clinical decisions and actions regarding inmate health care are the sole responsibility of qualified health care professionals and should not be countermanded by others. The contract medical provider shall be responsible for arranging for appropriate health resources and for determining what services are needed. The Chief Deputy of Corrections or the authorized designee shall be responsible for providing the custodial support to ensure a safe and secure environment for the delivery of services and accessibility to the inmates.

720.3 MEDICAL AUTONOMY

Clinical decisions shall be made only after a thorough evaluation of the patient's complaint and physical or mental condition. The implementation of clinical decisions is to be completed in an effective and safe manner that does not violate the security regulations of the facility.

720.4 PROBLEM RESOLUTION

Any issues arising because of the clinical decision process shall be reviewed using medical records, grievances, staff complaints, and any other relevant data.

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